

## HOW TO THROW A DISCUS.

Throwing the discus is one of the oldest forms of missile propelling exercise, and it might be said, perhaps, to be the only game of the ancient Greeks that has come down to us unaltered. In the early ages of physical culture this pastime occupied a front rank among the favored athletic accomplishments, and was only approached in point of excellence by boxing and wrestling. Of course, the stragglers and devotees of the cestus were held in high esteem, but the disk thrower as a model of muscular humanity was the ideal athlete of those early times.

The discus then most generally in use consisted of a piece of flat metal or stone or very often a lump of heavy and compact wood. Most commonly, however, it was made of copper and shaped somewhat like the ball of the eye bulging in the center, but growing thinner at the edge. Lucian has described it as a small, round bucker, so polished and smoothed, that it readily slipped from the hand of the person holding it.

In throwing the athlete placed himself in a space called the balbis. He advanced his right leg, slightly bending the knee with the weight of the body principally resting on the right foot. When he was ready to launch the missile he bent his body forward, the left hand taking a point of support on the right thigh while his right extended, holding the discus and raised behind him to the level of his shoulder. Remaining a moment in this position he described a semi-circle in the air, and the athlete, collecting all his strength, made his throw, at the same time leaping forward to increase the force of the projection.

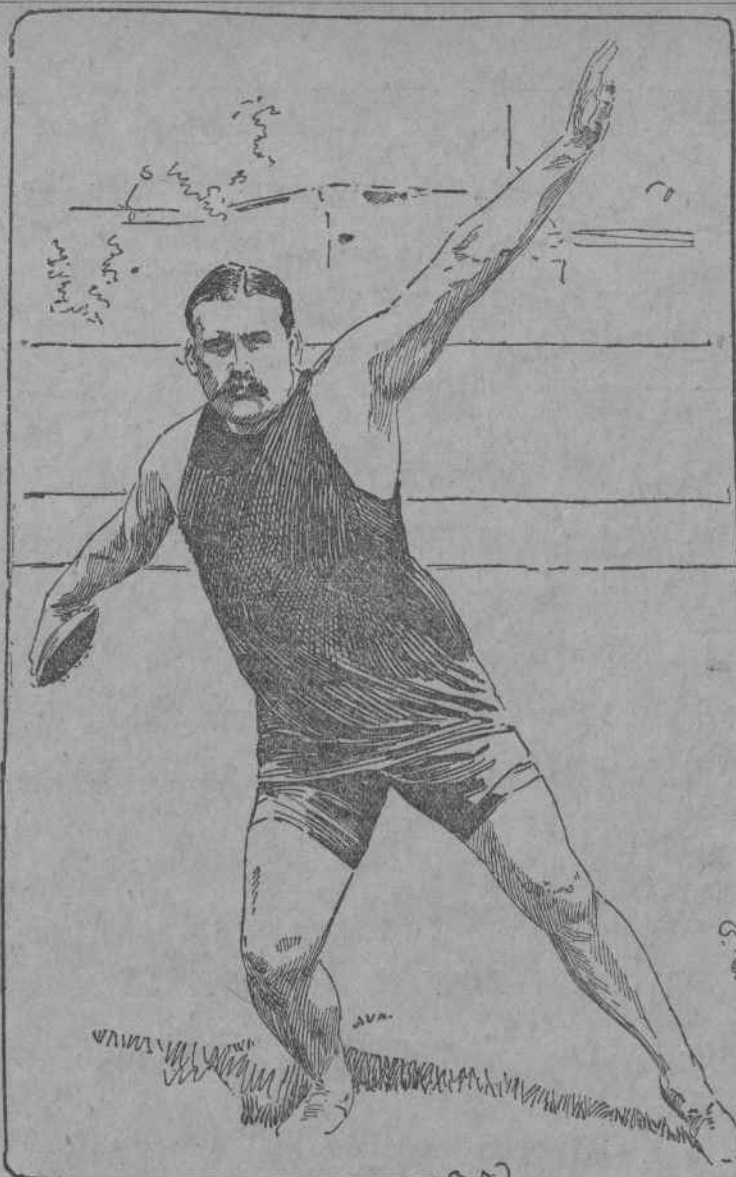
A condition governing the contest and one universally and emphatically insisted on was that should the thrower happen to let the discus drop after having taken his stand in the balbis he was then and there debarr'd from that particular contest.

The ancient disk throwers entered the arena in a nude state. It was of course optional, but as it was generally understood that the least particle of clothing was detrimental to the freedom of action, not very many aspirants for fame but appeared entirely naked. At first the competitions were decided by casting the implement at a mark, the winner being he who could lay his discus nearest to the proscribed object; but as time wore on, however, more liberal notions crept in, until in the end the athlete who achieved the greatest distance was decorated with the laurel wreath.

The discus throwers at play was a favorite theme with Greek artists, but no one has treated the subject as happily as the sculptor Myron. He was the first to render the athlete in the act of throwing. The original statue of the Discobolus has not been transmitted to us, but many copies exist, the best of which is to be found in the British Museum. Myron flourished about 432 B. C., and was gifted with a rare genius for modelling animals, as well as human beings. All his works are instinct with life and action, and it is principally for these qualities he has been admired by critics in all ages.

We now turn our attention to the modern form of the sport. The revival programme of the Olympian games at Athens last Spring, contained a discus throwing competition, and the winner, Robert Garrett, being an American, the game attracted a vast amount of attention at the time. Garrett defeated the Greek record holder, and, according to the newspaper reports, the distance accomplished was something like ninety-four feet.

The weight of the modern implement is 4½ pounds. It is made of lignum vitae, is a perfect circle, and measures eight inches in diameter. It is shod with iron and is convex in the center. The Knickerbocker Athletic Club have included it in their programme for September 10, and the competi-



James S. Mitchel Throwing the Discus.

tion will be held subject to the same rules as those of the Olympic Games. A nine foot square will supplant the balbis of old, and the competitor cannot overstep any part of the boundary line under penalty of disqualification. There is no heed paid to style, and the athlete is free to manipulate the missile any way his fancy pleases, provided he does not use any mechanical aids or other artificial appliances in getting his hold on the missile.

I have tried several different methods of throwing the discus, and while each had its good points of recommendation, the one I practice presently is the one I found the most effective, and it is not given here merely as a style par excellence, but as a guide to any aspiring novice at the game.

The thrower takes the disk in his left hand and stands at the back line of the square, with his right foot placed horizontally with the line and his left about eighteen inches forward, the toe pointing to the front line of the square. After limbering up the muscles of his right arm by stretching it to its fullest extent, he lifts the disk over his head and proceeds to get his grip on it. The grip is an important part of the performance and should be studied with great care. The fingers should be kept well apart, only the first joints coming on the edge of the disk and thumb placed flat sideways against the side of the disk about two inches from the edge.

When the athlete finds he has a comfortable hold, he takes a quick step forward and brings his arm down partly behind him, palm downward, holding the disk. He then takes a little hop and another step forward at the same time. The right half of the body is brought sharply to front and the arm is rightly swung forward in unison with the concentrated effort of the entire muscular system, and the disk is thrown away. A vital part of the game is not to wobble the disk in the air, and this can be avoided by always remembering to keep the palm of the hand downward. A smooth, scaling motion given to the throw will send the missile a great distance, and

this will only be mastered by continued practice.

The old style, from an artistic point of view, was ahead of the modern method, but artistic appearances in throwing weights count but very little if you cannot make the implement travel. Taken as an exercise discus throwing is bound to become very popular, because it is fascinating, and, like throwing the hammer, leads to a study of the elements. It is so light that very little muscular exertion is required, and men of all shades, shapes and weights can indulge in it without fear of strains or other injuries propagated by throwing heavy weights.

JAMES SANSFIELD MITCHEL.

### TO-MORROW'S CYCLE MEET

The L. A. W. run to Coney Island and Bath Beach to-day promises to be one of the best attended in years. The South Brooklyn, Logan, Vm and other clubs will turn out in a body, and with pleasant weather it will be worth a visit to the path to see the procession. The run will be held as a preliminary to the annual Fall meet of the New York State division of the L. A. W., which will be held at the Manhattan Beach track to-morrow.

The riders will assemble at the clubhouse of the South Brooklyn Wheelmen, No. 375 Ninth street, Brooklyn, at 10 a. m. Chief Consul Isaac B. Potter and Park Commissioner Timothy L. Woodruff will ride at the head of the procession. The route will be down the cycle path to Coney Island, after a dip in the ocean, the return will be made via the new path to Eighteenth avenue, and then along that route to Avoca Villa, where dinner will be served. Provisions have been made to have two boats in readiness to take those who wish to go for a sail on the Bay. While at Bath Beach a photograph will be taken of the party. Many women will accompany the various clubs on the run. The races on Monday will begin at 3 o'clock, and the contests will be run off so promptly that the last race ought to be over by 6 o'clock. Schnessler, Finn, McElroy and the other policemen who are entered in the police championship race are training earnestly, and the contest ought to be well worth watching. The messenger boys are working just as earnestly for their championship contest. Most of the riders entered in the two State championships have been hard at work at the track for the past few days.

## WESTERN BETTORS ARE RICH.

The Good Book tells of the wise men who came out of the East, but turf annals of to-day record the doings of the wise ones that hail from the West.

Hardly a day has passed since the Sheephead Bay meeting opened on which a generous share of the purses have not been placed to the credit of Western horsemen, and in almost every instance the result has included enormous winnings in bets. These winners have not only been the immediate stable connections, but also the numerous contingent of heavy bettors who have followed the Western circuit the best part of the Summer. They are now here for the purpose of capturing some of the dollars of the local "layers," whose pockets had been well filled by the bewildering form that has been the rule since the season opened.

When one hears of a plunge nowadays it is nearly always that of some Westerner. Byron McClelland, Riley Graman, Joe Ullman, Will Wallace and half a dozen others who might be mentioned are the leaders. They are to the betting world today what Mike Dwyer or P. Lordard was a few years ago. The moment they enter the ring and back a horse, the word goes down the line, and there is a stampede to follow them. It is the old story. Those who in former years were looked up to as master hands at calculating the probable

result of a race are now forgotten. A bettor's fancies are fickle to an extreme. Success brings admiration and "loadyism." The plunger of the hour is king. Those of previous years are de-throned. The list of fallen ones is an extensive one.

In a walk from the paddock to the domain of the accommodating layers of odds one will meet a score of these shattered idols. Fortune has turned her face from them. They still go on betting, and nearly all manage to make it pay, but their "nerve" is gone. Their judgment is as good as ever, but it is now a case of dollars where it was once hundreds. They go their way quietly, for their opinions are no longer sought for. These are the plungers of old. The new plunger is the main of the hour, and from the West come nearly all of those who have found the season a profitable one.

This class of "past plungers" has received numerous additions during the last two years. This increase is due not alone to the bewildering form that has been seen, but to the ridiculously low prices which have ruled since the introduction of the credit system of betting. The two combined have proved too much for the best men in the business.

Perhaps the class of bettors in whose ranks most havoc has been wrought is that division known as the "rail birds." A few years ago to share their secrets and to follow them in their investments meant sure profit. Several of their number thought nothing of betting a thousand dollars on almost every race. They are still in the field, but limits have been woefully reduced. Ask them a reason for their fall and the answer is: "The time when form was a guide to be relied upon is gone. 'First to-day and last to-morrow' is too frequently the rule to warrant one taking previous races as a basis of calculation. Officials have proved so loath to cause scandal that jockeys and owners have grown bold. The man who beats the races these days owes his success either to blind luck or he shares the confidences of the pirates of the turf."

Another set of plungers who have suffered are the "sure thing" players, those who made a practice of waiting for "certainties"—that is, bets at prohibitive odds where it looked as if a horse would be compelled to fall down to lose. Many made the plan a paying one for years and several grew rich at the game, but when losses came they came rapidly, and of the dozen who might be named whose faces were familiar Mike Dwyer is, perhaps, the sole survivor, and even he has been made to pay dearly at times for his ventures. This season his own stable has helped him to hold his own, but even he has reduced limits. "Pittsburg Phil" is still in the fray, but caution is his watchword, for he, too, has found some of his most careful calculations upset.

Lucien Appleby, Jack McDonald, Bob Aiken, Fred Cowan, Jack Bennett, Captain Turnbridge, George Harris, all have the same tale to tell. Their path has been far from smooth.

The Westerners are alone the winners, unless, perhaps, we except the favored few whose names are whispered as members of the alleged combination whose doings are now the subject of investigation by the Jockey Club.

Among the rank and file bettors winners are equally few and far between. The layers have pretty well emptied their pockets, but from "the line" comes the cry, "The Westerners have got it all!" Lucky wise ones that have come out of the West! FRANK J. BRYAN.

## AUSTRALIAN CRICKETERS TO VISIT US.

The annals of Anglo-Australian cricket are full of records of stubbornly fought contests and brilliant feats of valor and skill, and there is no denying that the Australian eleven of 1896 is the best all-round team since that so splendidly captained by Murdoch in 1882. Their tour in Great Britain was brought to a close yesterday, and of the thirty-two matches in which they have met, the strongest teams in the Mother Country, defeat has fallen to their lot but five times.

Readers of the Journal have been kept posted in the doings of the Antipodeans since they first arrived in London, and now

high reputation in the cricket world. They are due here next Thursday week, and are scheduled to play their first match against the Gentlemen of Philadelphia at Manham on the 18th, 19th and 21st. On the following Wednesday and Thursday they will meet a New York eleven on the grounds of the New Jersey A. C., at Bayonne, and two more matches will be played in Philadelphia before proceeding to Chicago.

Captain Harry Trott is known here, and he has shown this season that he has lost none of his skill with either bat or ball, and for a stout man he is a wonderful fielder. George Giffen is to Australia what W. G. Grace is to England, and is too well known to need any praise. He has not been in the best of health this Summer, but his bowling has been better than ever. As a batsman Sid Gregory has few equals, and he again heads the list of averages. Considering his size, the power he puts into his strokes is wonderful.

Among the new men to visit us, E. Jones, who has earned the name of "Express Delivery Jones," by reason of his terrific speed when bowling, will claim most attention. A few months ago Jones contemplated making his home in England, but this idea has been abandoned and doubtless he will play sad havoc with the wickets in America.

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Gaudaur and Stanbury Row Four Miles on the Thames To-Worrow.

James Stanbury, of Australia, and Jake Gaudaur, of Canada, who will meet to-morrow on the Thames to contest the sculling championship of the world for a stake of \$2000, are by no means strangers to each other. Up to the present time the oarsmen have met twice, but the argument has all been in favor of Gaudaur, as on each occasion he has beaten Stanbury.

In favor of the Australian, it is urged, and that with truth, that he was meeting Gaudaur under conditions to which he was an entire stranger. The races were rowed with turns, and naturally Gaudaur, having been used to this sort of business all his life, was far more expert than Stanbury in getting his boat around, and to this circumstance is the dual victory of the

French Canadian attributed.

Whether Stanbury and his supporters are correct in the views they hold will doubtless be settled in to-morrow's struggle, but before Gaudaur sailed from this side he said he felt pretty confident of repeating his former successes, and his backers consider that he is rowing better than ever just now. The English professional oarsmen, too, who recently competed at Halifax and later on Lake Erie, were also of this opinion, and from all accounts there seems no doubt that Gaudaur has gained great pace since his memorable struggle with Beach on the Thames.

In the interval which has taken place Gaudaur has not been idle. Winter or Summer, he always keeps himself thoroughly fit, and as a rule he is ready to row

almost at a moment's notice. Jake has always been very popular in England, and a well-known authority on oarsmanship who met him three weeks ago, shortly after his arrival at Putney, says: "Gaudaur, who how seems to row a shorter and quicker stroke than when he met Beach, looks a perfect specimen of an athlete. Facially he has not altered greatly, but in the place of the handsome, well-set-up youth that Englishmen were acquainted with years ago, we now find a well matured man, finely developed and splendidly proportioned."

Jem Stanbury has kept himself in pretty good trim since he met and so signally defeated "Wag" Harding on July 13, and the Australian confidently refuse to believe that he can be beaten.